

**NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR PARTIAL EXEMPTION
FROM PIPELINE ROUTE SELECTION PROCEDURES
AND PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETINGS
MINNESOTA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD**

**Application of Hutchinson Utilities Commission for a Pipeline Routing Permit
Pursuant to Partial Exemption from Pipeline Route Selection Procedures**

Hutchinson Utilities Commission, a municipal utility, proposes to construct an 89 mile natural gas pipeline between Trimont, Minnesota (in Martin County) and Hutchinson, Minnesota (in McLeod County). The pipeline will connect with the Northern Border Pipeline Company pipeline near Trimont, Minnesota. Approximately 34 miles of the pipeline from Trimont to south of New Ulm will consist of 16-inch outside diameter pipe, and the remaining 55 miles of the pipeline from south of New Ulm to Hutchinson will consist of 12.75-inch outside diameter pipe. The pipeline will be buried underground within easements secured in the following Minnesota counties: Martin, Watonwan, Brown, Nicollet, Sibley and McLeod.

The Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) will hold a public information meeting in each county to provide information on the proposed project and to receive information to assist the EQB in determining whether to grant or deny the partial exemption application. The county information meetings are scheduled for the times and places listed. Representatives from other governmental agencies may be present to discuss their oversight of the project. A more detailed explanation of the proposed project is contained in the application for partial exemption from pipeline route selection procedures filed with the EQB. Copies of Hutchinson's application, pipeline routing rules and the pipeline routing act will be available at the information meetings.

In deciding whether to grant or deny the partial exemption, the EQB shall consider comments that are filed with the EQB, the record of the public information meetings, and the information contained in the application relevant to the criteria for partial exemption. Any person may file comments with the EQB stating reasons why the EQB should grant or deny the partial exemption. All comments should be submitted to the EQB by May 29, 2002. If the EQB grants the partial exemption application it must issue a pipeline routing permit. If the partial exemption is denied the applicant may request that the EQB continue processing its application under full pipeline route selection procedures.

Minnesota Rules, Chapter 4415 regulates the review procedures for the routing of pipelines in Minnesota.

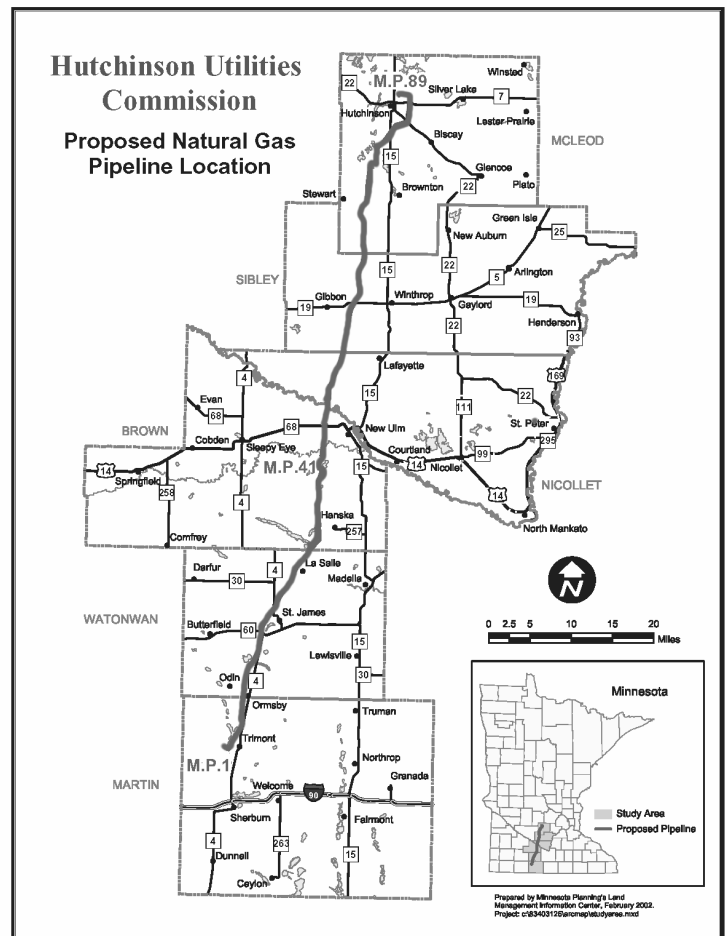
Hutchinson Utilities Commission is contemplating construction primarily during the summer of 2003.

Additional information may be obtained from and comments should be submitted to: Larry B. Hartman, Environmental Quality Board, 300 Centennial Building, 658 Cedar Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55155.

Tel: (651) 296-5089, or 1-800-657-3794,
fax (651) 296-3698,

e-mail larry.hartman@state.mn.us

(Map which shows location of proposed pipeline route.)



INFORMATION MEETING SCHEDULE

Martin County
April 24, 2002 at 1:30 p.m.
Triumph Hall
546 Main Street E.
Trimont, MN 56176

Watsonwan County
April 24, 2002 at 7:30 p.m.
St. James Community Building
505 First Avenue
St. James, MN 56081

Nicollet County
April 25, 2002 at 1:30 p.m.
Lafayette Community Center
540 Seventh Street
Lafayette, MN 56054

Brown County
April 25, 2002 at 7:30 p.m.
Law Enforcement Center, Lower Level
15 South Washington
New Ulm, MN 56073

Sibley County
May 1, 2002 at 7:30 p.m.
Winthrop City Hall
305 North Main Street
Winthrop, MN 55396

McLeod County
May 2, 2002 at 1:30 p.m.
Brownton Community Center
310 Second Street North
Brownton, MN 55312

McLeod County
May 2, 2002 at 7:30 p.m.
Hutchinson City Hall
111 Hassan Street S.E.
Hutchinson, MN 55350